

**Mayor Fred L. Armstrong  
STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS  
Building CommUNITY  
February 18, 2003  
5:30 p.m.**

**Honor Guard  
Invocation  
Pledge to Flag  
“Share the Warmth” video.**

**Mayor: Reverend Yeaton, elected and appointed officials, city department heads, city employees; firefighters, police officers, medical and military personnel, we are honored that you are with us this evening.**

**My friends in the media and citizens of our great commUNITY, good evening.**

**I come to you this evening with my wife Kathi; our daughters Shannon and Gretchen; our sons-in-law Randy Royer and Ryan Brand; our granddaughters Josie & Ellie; Kathi’s parents Mildred and Hoyt Burns; my sister and brother-in-law Sharon and David Hayes; and members of our extended family John and Sally Brand.**

**As I deliver this evening’s State of the City Address, it is important that my family is with me because my family and my faith are the centers of my life.**

**There is no more crucial building block for a strong CommUNITY and a promising future than strong families and strong family values.**

**I have feelings tonight that I had during my previous States of the City: excitement, gratitude, and, of course, honor; the honor of being able to serve as your Mayor.**

**For that, I am truly grateful and I thank you.**

**In recapping our past year, you will hear how we accomplished important CommUNITY goals while working within our budgetary constraints.**

**We created well-developed, workable plans and policies that allowed us to respond in a strong, responsible manner.**

**We discussed issues openly, found ways to address our needs and made the best use of our assets.**

**City Department heads managed your finances well.**

**While Columbus continued to grow, our general day-to-day city services, when viewed in the totality of a year's time, unquestionably shows that each City department not only maintained the quality that you have come to expect, but surpassed that quality in most areas.**

**This evening, let us not think of government in terms of size or intrusiveness.**

**Our administration has a record showing that we fight bigger government.**

**Our record promotes "better" government; focusing on results, not red tape.**

**I assure you, the accomplishments of our city employees, under the guidance of their respective supervisors, have been most remarkable.**

**Tonight, we celebrate their most noted achievements. I am pleased to report on the State of our City:**

**Our airport continued to grow. Airport personnel aim high and strive to meet the needs of our customers both in terms of physical facilities and air service; they are a vital link to the national aviation network; and an important contributor to our local economy.**

**All planned projects for 2002 were accomplished well within their operating budget, continuing their status of remaining completely self-sufficient.**

**Folks, that means NO LOCAL TAX DOLLARS!**

**2003's Capitol Improvement Plan identifies the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the parallel taxiway system as this year's primary project.**

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**It's a fact: exposure to the arts improves the quality and the content of our lives and many businesses locating or relocating to a new CommUNITY cite cultural resources as one of the foremost criteria when deciding where to move.**

**While celebrating 30 years of service, more than 120-thousand people participated in Columbus Area Arts Council activities.**

**Thousands of children (and too often their parents) continued to use the Commons playground on a regular basis.**

**The Arts Council brought us free family movies, rock concerts, The Mill Race Players, raised more than \$50,000 at the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual unCommon Cause, and joined me in recognizing local residents who made significant contributions to our CommUNITY through the arts.**

**2002 winners of the Mayor's Arts Awards were Cameron Collins and Bob & Helen Haddad.**

**More than 12-thousand people attended Chautauqua of the Arts providing our hotels, restaurants and other travel-related businesses their busiest weekend of the year; and, in partnership with the Youth Services Center, the Arts Council provided some of our most vulnerable citizens – kids trying to grow up without much guidance or much attention, boys and girls we call “at-risk youth”, opportunities to experience the creative process.**

**2003 finds the Arts Council seeking even more ways to collaborate with other CommUNITY-minded organizations to see that Columbus is not “just another place to live”, but an “exceptional place” where creativity and innovation are valued and encouraged.**

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**We nurtured our neighborhoods, going beyond picking up trash, maintaining the streets, and removing snow, and removing snow, and removing snow.**

**The video that you saw earlier, “Share the Warmth” was a CommUNITY Development program offered to income eligible residents with inadequate heating systems.**

**This program was twice recognized by the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns which included our winning the prestigious “Creative Innovation Municipal Service Award”.**

**Following a recently completed county-wide Housing Needs Assessment, CommUNITY Development staff is developing a comprehensive housing plan for the number one targeted area for renovation and development: our Lincoln Central neighborhood.**

**They partnered with the Columbus Service League, the department of Parks & Recreation, and the Ecumenical Assembly of Bartholomew County Churches for “Families Helping Families” and provided support to Turning Point, the Columbus Child Care Center, Lincoln Central Family Neighborhood Center, Eastside CommUNITY Center, Columbus Enterprise Development Corporation and others.**

**CommUNITY Development participates in a myriad of neighborhood revitalization programs, they plan and organize numerous important CommUNITY events, they administer our downtown Streetscape program, and they monitor, with an exceptionally keen eye, our City's Tax Abatement program.**

**Working for clean, safe neighborhoods, they spearheaded an effort to eradicate one of Columbus' oldest eyesores, Foster Trailer Park. Now, thanks to its purchase by**

**Garland Brook Cemetery, this blighted area has the beginnings of a beautiful new green space.**

**In 2003, CommUNITY Development remains dedicated to building CommUNITY neighborhood by neighborhood.**

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**As the pace and the complexity of technology continues to change, our Information Services staff, of 2, has the responsibility of meeting our technological needs.**

**In 2002, our city's web site had 2.6 million hits – an increase of 65-percent over the previous year.**

**While these numbers are impressive, we cannot rest on our laurels.**

**I have instructed our IT staff to explore additional ways of making this important commUNITY asset even more valuable, not only in terms of providing information, but also in our ability to transact business.**

**E-government will significantly increase our ability to better serve the public by creating a government without boundaries.**

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**City Hall remained an extremely popular meeting place with well over one-thousand meetings held here during 2002 and our Facilities team had it “ship shape” and shining for all one-thousand plus.**

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**The Columbus Housing Authority had a fantastic year. They worked hard, improved our Public Housing and Section 8 Program scores and received an excellent Financial and Management Audit for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row designating them as a “High Performer” among U.S. Housing Authorities.**

**In addition, they improved Pence Place Apartments, Heritage Woods, Sycamore Place Apartments, and numerous single-family housing units throughout our City.**

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**Rising costs and increased demand made it difficult for Columbus Utilities to operate and still improve service -- but they did.**

**They produced, treated, and delivered quality water; collected and treated wastewater; and provided these services in an environmentally sensitive, cost conscious manner.**

**This department is in its best financial condition ever and it is served by some of the most conscientious and hardworking employees available anywhere.**

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**Last year, the Columbus Human Rights Commission celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.**

**This staff of 3 and the volunteer members of the Columbus Human Rights Commission, continue to vigorously enforce our anti-discrimination ordinance and works to prevent and eliminate discrimination by providing education and training throughout our CommUNITY.**

**In Columbus, we celebrate our diversity by weaving the threads of many colors into the fabric of our CommUNITY; making sure that we provide a solid foundation for our future while honoring the bonds between our generations.**

**Inclusiveness remains a hallmark of our administration.**

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**Overlay, patching, sealing, and concrete repair projects covered almost 20 miles of city streets.**

**More than 120, ADA compliant, ramps were installed and Walk Works replaced almost 2000 feet of sidewalk.**

**Plans are ready and rights-of-way secured for the extension of Taylor Road.**

**Our Engineering staff designs, inspects, supervises and reviews all public works projects; they maintain city maps, traffic inventory, and accident maps; they are responsible for reviewing all proposed plats, subdivisions, and permits; they issue and inspect every permit for every street cut, for every driveway, and for every sidewalk in the City of Columbus. A huge job for a fulltime staff of 5.**

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**2002 saw several major changes in our CommUNITY land use and planning efforts.**

**Some notable examples include the new Menards' store; the construction of the new Wal-Mart Super Center; and the third phase of the Shadow Creek Farms residential CommUNITY.**

**Other residential expansions included new phases for Northbrook, Terrace Woods, and Carter's Crossing.**

**Columbus Center received approval for a new large Target store.**

**Persimmon Woods was approved as a new, large-lot residential subdivision on Terrace Lake Road.**

**Many were concerned about the number of older buildings left empty as businesses moved to new locations; the news here has been nearly all good: Eastbrook Plaza, Clifty Crossing, the former Lowe's building, the former Sun Electronics building, and Holiday Center all got new anchor tenants.**

**The Little Creek Plaza commercial area on SR 46 west is now properly rezoned for fresh development and the former Arvin buildings are occupied, most notably by Doug Otto's dream: a United Way social services complex.**

**Longer-range planning was not neglected, we have a new Land Use Plan and work continued on our Thoroughfare Plan.**

**Our Planning staff, the volunteer members of the Columbus Plan Commission and the Columbus Board of Zoning Appeals do important work in making and keeping Columbus a CommUNITY of quality.**

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**To ensure that all children and families enjoyed safe, clean recreation, our department of Parks & Recreation met their mission by delivering high-quality park and recreation services and continued CommUNITY outreach by conducting a marketing survey to determine CommUNITY needs.**

**Fundraising efforts to improve People Trails raised 95% of our needed match for the Haw Creek Trail Extension Project, thanks to John Nash, Chair of our fundraising campaign, and the Columbus Parks Foundation.**

**Longtime Park Board member, Page Gifford retired after 15 years of service.**

**Under Page's leadership, the Columbus Department of Parks and Recreation was awarded the Gold Medal Award from the National Recreation and Park Association and received the National Park and Recreation Association's Outstanding Board award.**

**Although time prevents me from listing all of the activities and programs that would not have been made possible without our department of Parks and Recreation, I extend my sincere appreciation to staff, to the volunteer members of the Park Board, all of our sponsors, our donors, and, of course, our volunteers.**

**Without your efforts, these programs would not have been possible. Thank you.**

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**Safety remains a core value in every City department.**

**In the wake of 9/11, our insurance team has become extremely proactive.**

**They are looking at areas of risk today that we never before seriously considered.**

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**In addition to being responsible for employee recruitment, coordinating employee training, and maintaining all employee records, our Personnel staff spent 2002 developing and implementing policies and assisting our department heads in planning and preparing for future departmental needs.**

**Special recognition goes to Personnel Director, Chuck Boll, who recently earned his certification as a Senior Professional in Human Resources.**

**To become certified, Chuck passed a comprehensive examination and demonstrated a strong background of professional human resource experience.**

**This certification signifies Chuck's commitment to personal excellence, to the human resource profession and to the City of Columbus. Congratulations, Chuck.**

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**We didn't forget "man's best friend": Columbus Animal Control is committed to providing comprehensive care by providing a safe haven for abandoned, abused and neglected animals.**

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**Their mission goes far beyond their name. The Columbus Fire Department is a multi-role safety organization known as a leader in fire service.**

**Our firefighters and medical personnel protect lives and property through extensive fire-prevention and safety education efforts, in addition to quick and effective response to emergencies.**

**The department began last year implementing new ideas for improving and stream lining their training and vehicle maintenance programs; they held the annual Junior Firefighter Academy; provided educational classes; and building inspections.**

**They provided aid for fire investigations in Bartholomew County; assisted many elderly by installing smoke detectors in their homes; and sponsored the Professional Fire Fighters Union of Indiana state conference.**

**The Training Division established an improved training curriculum and provided 31-thousand hours of training!**

**During the holidays, firefighters, medical personnel and a myriad of volunteers delivered 272 food baskets and provided 730 area children with clothing and toys.**

**For their commitment to the Cheer Fund, I would like to recognize and especially thank:**

**Carol and Jerry Maley**

**Phil Newton**

**R.E.M.C. Represented this evening by former Columbus Mayor Nancy Ann Brown. Cummins Employees and Distributors**

**The Larry Shafer family. We are honored to have with us this evening Larry's widow, Tammy, and his parents: Wilma and George Shafer.**

**Mike King is here on behalf of Q-Mix 107 dot 3.**

**Owens Communications is represented by Tony Owens and, representing Cameo Color is Phil Allen.**

**Thank you all for your support, we truly appreciate it.**

**Medic 1 personnel made more than 24-hundred runs with more than half requiring Advanced Life Support.**

**Engines 4 & 6 were certified as Advanced Life Support units providing quicker Paramedic response to outlying areas.**

**We depend on our firefighters and medical personnel to deliver safety services of the highest quality; to support and maintain a safe, healthy, well-trained and highly professional workforce; and to be a CommUNITY resource for life-saving knowledge and information.**

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**Drugs and crime destroy children, families, and CommUNITY.**

**Since 1996, we have had an aggressive, comprehensive plan that is working.**

**The following, details only a fraction of the work done by our police officers as they enforce the law and preserve the peace while applying the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and accountability.**

**Although arrests have increased 105-percent since 1995; the bottom line is: arrests have gone up because officers are working harder. Columbus is an extremely safe CommUNITY.**

**Our Take-Home Car Program continues to show huge benefits. This program promotes increased police presence in our neighborhoods and on our streets.**

**More than 3-thousand incidents were handled by officers who were off duty.**

**Our Detective division investigated more than 1500 criminal cases; met with area merchants and provided training to local banks for procedures on how to deal with fraud and robbery; and completed investigation of a serious battery identifying the suspect and filing the case within 24-hours.**

**In 2002, 18 methamphetamine labs were located in all of Marion County. During this same period of time, our Columbus Narcotics Unit eliminated 17 methamphetamine labs.**

**In Columbus, drug dealers are caught, they are incarcerated and they are sent to prison.**

**We are tough on drugs and we are tough on crime!**

**SWAT is a highly-trained unit of officers who complete mandatory testing to ensure that they maintain top physical condition.**



**Made up solely of officers who volunteer, this task force, is on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.**

**From speaking with our children to making presentations to our senior citizens, Columbus Police Officers discuss issues that affect the lives of each and every one of us.**

**My friends, a disturbing National trend has developed over the past 2 years: juvenile crime is increasing.**

**Protecting our children and reducing juvenile crime is a priority of upper most importance.**

**Therefore, it is imperative that police do more than enforce juvenile law; they must help to educate our young people in proper decision-making and help to break any connection between early delinquent behavior and later criminal activity.**

**We must prevent our children from being exposed to negative influences that lead to drugs and crime.**

**1200 students participated in our DARE program.**

**At this time I would like to recognize and thank the Columbus Area Rodders, one of our DARE's biggest sponsors.**

**Bill & Sandy Hatton are in the audience this evening representing the Columbus Rodders, will you please stand to be recognized.**

**2002 was the first full year for our Cultural Liaison Officer.**

**The purpose of this position is to address special training needs and to serve as a liaison to various CommUNITY groups.**

**Our Liaison Officer conducted Spanish training sessions for officers from all of southern Indiana and offered assistance, many times, to members of our growing Hispanic CommUNITY.**

**2002 saw a record number of young people participating in Police Athletic League programs.**

**Through the use of grants and partnerships with several local businesses, land for a new PAL facility has been secured and a ground breaking ceremony is planned early this spring.**

**DARE and PAL involve kids in positive programs, but let's do more.**

**We have empowered, supported, and protected our young people by creating a more family-friendly CommUNITY, but let's do more.**

**We created a Mayor's Youth Council, sponsored forums on topics of interest to local youth, but let's do more.**

**We encourage city employees to serve as role models and mentors to students interested in careers in public service, but let's do more.**

**We provide ColumBUS transportation so that kids have greater access to and from after-school and summer programs, but let's do more.**

**Plans are underway and soon, I will announce details about a new After-School Council that will use the leadership of the Mayor's office to facilitate new after-school opportunities and to communicate and collaborate with existing after-school programs so that no child in Columbus has to be alone or on the streets during after-school hours.**

**A few incidents occurred last year where the impact to our CommUNITY was so great that I am going to take the time to give them special recognition.**

**These accomplishments go beyond "above and beyond the call of duty":**

**On May 8<sup>th</sup>, a 15 year old male was sucked into a 24-inch overflow pipe. Columbus Police officers Troy Love and Jay Fredrick jumped into the water and with assistance from civilians, fire department personnel and other police officers, they were able to extract this young man from the pipe and resuscitate him.**

**After days of continuous surveillance, officers arrested extremely dangerous escapees from the Orange County Jail. Detectives, SWAT and uniform officers worked tirelessly while these dangerous fugitives were in Columbus. Without their efforts, we only imagine what the outcome could have been.**

**There are several new programs that have been or will be initiated within CPD this year:**

**POP – Problem Oriented Policing is a special dedicated unit that is responsible for problem areas and special needs;**

**Explorers – is a unit of young people ages 14 to 19 who can assist with a wide variety of duties during special events; and**

**Less than Lethal Weapons is new equipment that is designed for specific situations for which non-lethal force is called.**

**So, how safe is Columbus?**

**\*The State average for violent crimes is 87% higher than Columbus and the national average is 151% higher.**

**Columbus Police, in partnership with citizens, better serve and better protect, making our streets safer and our CommUNITY more secure.**

**We have not stood by idly and waited for crime and its causes to simply go away.**

**We must provide our public safety officials every tool available to prevent, apprehend, and penalize violent criminals and to protect our lives, our families, and our property.**

**Since September 11, 2001, cities and towns across America have been working to ensure hometown security by reviewing and revising emergency preparedness plans.**

**Public Safety Director, Jim Norris, is Columbus' front line resource for this responsibility. Jim meets regularly with emergency preparedness, public safety, and medical officials regarding our plan and their roles as the front line of hometown defense.**

**Our plan is in place, still the possibility of our being the target of a terrorist attack, although not totally impossible, is so improbable that our primary focus remains on stamping out drugs.**

**Drugs remain the biggest threat to our children and our commUNITY.**

**If necessary, I will support even more resources to prevent drugs and crime in Columbus.**

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**Motor Vehicle Highway is the department whose crew picks up our brush, overlay our alleys, and oversees our street maintenance program.**

**These are the guys who pick up our leaves; remove our snow, and sweep our streets.**

**Last year, they did most of the work at the Police and Fire Memorial Plaza; provided us with superior street maintenance; improved our snow removal efforts; assisted Solid Waste Management with Recycling efforts; and improved our loose leaf pick up program.**

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**Our Sanitation department has 23 full-time employees and is assigned the duty of providing refuse collection.**

**Sanitation works diligently to eliminate loose trash; they implemented sanitation and compost routes in our newly developed and newly annexed areas.**

**This year goals include: starting a container repair program and reorganizing routes to better distribute work loads. Second to none! Thank you for the work that you do for our CommUNITY.**

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**The function of our 3 person Shop & Garage is to keep the City vehicle fleet operational. A big job for a small department. A job that they, fortunately, do very well.**

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**Traffic is a 5-person operation with duties including: maintaining all traffic signs and traffic signals; painting all traffic control pavement markings; providing barricades for temporary traffic control in emergencies or for special events.**

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**ColumBUS provides affordable transportation with accessible fixed routes and a complimentary paratransit service for residents who are unable to use our fixed route service.**

**3 of our ColumBUS drivers participated in the Indiana Transportation Roadeo. Cindy Setser placed 3<sup>rd</sup> and Mary Hammons finished in 4<sup>th</sup> place.**

**Driver, Larry Christman placed first in the State allowing him to compete at the National Transportation Roadeo held in Austin, Texas where he placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation.**

**Goals for 2003 include:**

**Obtaining a transportation consultant to provide a route study that will determine how ColumBUS can even better service our CommUNITY.**

**ColumBUS is looking for ways to partner with the business CommUNITY; especially providing options to and from the workplace and the role employers can play in encouraging their employees to use ColumBUS and, they will discuss with Access Johnson County Transit Services, the possibility of providing a connecting route at the Edinburgh Outlet Mall.**

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**Please join me in showing our appreciation to all Columbus City employees and volunteers.**

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**According to a report from Indiana University's Kelley School of Business, recovery of the U.S. economy is now underway.**

**No secondary recession is anticipated. The GDP will increase. Business investment should advance, strengthening economic expansion. The dollar remains strong; and, Indiana will add more than 30,000 jobs.**

**Maybe we are turning the corner, but modest improvements in economic indicators or a rosy economic report from Indiana University or “political mumbo jumbo” mean very little to people out of work who are trying to support their families, put food on their tables, and pay their mortgages.**

**After the longest economic expansion in U.S. history, most people knew that, sooner or later, a slowdown was coming.**

**Did we do anything to prepare for it? We did.**

**We continued Economic Development strategies suited specifically to the needs of Columbus and Bartholomew County in an effort to bring new business and more jobs by creating an atmosphere of partnership between the public and private sectors.**

**We invested resources to stimulate economic development and we have planned economic development trips in an effort to bring more business and more jobs home.**

**We promoted smart growth planning as a way of attracting private sector investment, balanced with public service and infrastructure improvements.**

**Last Fall I spoke to the Indiana Economic Development Association about the importance of partnerships between economic development professionals and local government officials.**

**We were proactive and took action so that Columbus could move as comfortably as possible through the recession; staying well in front of our national economy.**

**Our number one goal is to keep people working, to keep companies in Columbus, and to keep our existing businesses healthy.**

**Our challenge was to fashion strategies to ensure that we are positioned not just to compete, but to thrive.**

**Just recently, we received great news: the Columbus Learning Center, with its primary purpose of responding to economic development, educational and training needs, has been approved!**

**The City provided land at Columbus Municipal Airport, for this high-tech facility that will house classrooms and labs, a center for Teaching and Learning, a Quality Improvement Center, business and industry training, and a Center for Career Counseling.**

**With dwindling revenues and increasing CommUNITY needs, we encourage not-for-profits and other service organizations to better define their roles as catalysts and change facilitators and to find new and different ways to get their jobs done.**

**Today's pace and complexity of technology calls for new, stronger partnerships to enhance employment opportunities for long-term prosperity.**

**Local economic development is dependent on strong infrastructure; specifically communications and information infrastructure.**

**Recognizing its value, we supported and encouraged the Connected CommUNITY Partnership.**

**CCP is connecting more of our residents through technology by bringing local technology experts together to design world-class infrastructure for communication.**

**Just as Columbus is known for our attractive, well-designed buildings, we hope to become known as a CommUNITY that invests in telecommunications architecture.**

**By improving our CommUNITY technological resources, we will be in a position to attract industries and services of the future.**

**Partnerships are a powerful tool!**

**By supporting, encouraging, and developing even more partnerships, we can draw on the talents and commitment of our citizens to work together to ensure economic opportunity and to make Columbus an even better place.**

**We haven't had all good news: last year was a harsh reminder that businesses, especially manufacturing businesses are downsizing.**

**Changes left many skilled craftsmen, from senior managers to line workers, in search of jobs that are less than suitable for them.**

**Still, our commUNITY spirit is unshaken. This is our town and we will not cease our efforts on your behalf.**

**Our local economy was highlighted by several local companies showing their commitment to Columbus by spending more than \$170M to build, to expand or to purchase new equipment.**

**OSR, Nagakura, Sunright America, M.C. Aluminum, Impact Forge, Quality Machine & Tool, TWB, all made new investments in Columbus.**

**We know that local economic development and job growth are largely determined by the success of "LOCAL" firms.**

**Although we must continue our recruiting efforts, our primary focus remains on enhancing the viability of firms ALREADY IN COLUMBUS!**

**In addition to these CommUNITY investments, the City, in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce saw many new businesses open their doors.**

**It is our goal to enhance our quality of life by improving economic opportunity.**

**I pledge the City's continued support of the Economic Development Board's objectives: to keep existing business healthy; to target recruiting efforts to businesses that will focus, not only on jobs, but jobs with livable wages; and, although we remain strongly committed to manufacturing and our automotive industry, we must diversify becoming "the" place for emerging technologies.**

**Already this year, we announced plans for Georg Utz Holding AG, to open an office in Columbus and to build a manufacturing plant here within the next couple of years.**

**This is our first Swiss company and we look forward to a very long and lasting relationship with Georg Utz.**

**Jobs were added at Cummins Walesboro and at the Arvin IT Center.**

**NTN Driveshaft is building a new 400,000 square foot building and will invest \$46.5M in new manufacturing equipment.**

**As a CommUNITY, we took advantage of good times and we laid important groundwork for the challenges that we are facing today.**

**As a CommUNITY, we have been proactive. We have money in the bank.**

**We have funding necessary to provide city services.**

**City department heads share my commitment of being extremely frugal and our frugality is paying off today.**

**Although its effectiveness continues to be debated, tax abatement is a tool that works for Columbus. Tax Abatement encourages development and encourages expansion.**

**Now, we must provide additional incentives that keep existing businesses solvent and that will attract new business and new investors who would not otherwise be interested.**

**Soon, I will ask Council to consider tax increment financing, which is simply another financing tool that will induce investment that would not have occurred without this incentive.**

**TIF provides redevelopment with a competitive edge and it enables the funding of the public investment necessary to keep Columbus working and to move Columbus forward.**

**This evening, it is my honor to recognize 4 local organizations that serve Columbus:**

**Since 1989, Net Forge has been “Doing better tomorrow, what we did well today”. With 3 years of zero lost time accidents, Net Forge has managed to provide significant cost improvements to their customers as a result of their quality, cost, and engineering improvement efforts.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen: the winner of the Mayor’s 2002 Business Award – Net Forge.**

**Accepting on behalf of Net Forge is: Chairman of the Board and CEO, Robert J. Stevens and Executive Vice President, William L. Holstein.**

**The Jewell-Rittman Funeral Home is one of Indiana’s fastest growing funeral homes. They attribute their success to innovative business concepts and strong family involvement. The 2002 Family Business Award goes to The Vernon Jewell-Nick Rittman Funeral Home.**

**Accepting on behalf of Jewell-Rittman is Nick Rittman and Heeth and Keith Jewell.**

**Hospice is derived from a medieval word for a place or shelter for weary travelers on a difficult journey. From 63 patients in 1980, the number of patients and families served by Hospice over the past 22 years has grown to more than 5-thousand.**

**Hospice is a significant and beloved part of Columbus and the 2002 winner of the Non-Profit Excellence Award.**

**Accepting on behalf of Hospice is Executive Director, Sandy Carmichael.**

**They sponsor and underwrite the Columbus Philharmonic, golf outings for the Chamber of Commerce; they contribute to athletic programs at Columbus East and Columbus North; sponsor the Families Helping Families initiative; support the United Way, Volunteers in Medicine, the Red Cross, Turning Point, Love Chapel, the Foundation for Youth, and our previous winner, Hospice.**

**Giving back to the commUNITIES they serve is an important part of corporate culture for the 2002 Corporate CommUNITY Involvement Award winner:**



**SIHO.**

**Accepting on behalf of SIHO's President and Chief Executive Officer, Dave Barker; Senior Vice President, Ron Sewell; VP of Marketing, Marc Rothbart; and Vice President of Provider Services, John Sadtler.**

**Congratulations to all of our winners.**

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**Like other communities, we had our ups and downs, but overall 2002 was a Year of Accomplishment.**

**We listened! To people: from every walk of life, from every corner of every neighborhood in every district, people shared with us their vision.**

**Our plan is a product of our many conversations, a plan that has been interactive and inclusive. It gives direction as to what action needs to be taken to make the goals and objectives of this plan happen.**

**Our Plan is a 20/20 Vision for Columbus two-thousand-20.**

**When I became Mayor, it was important to make government inclusive and accessible.**

**We implemented wide-ranging programs and projects to revitalize government.**

**We worked hard to promote involvement and improvement.**

**Tonight's Address is a reflection of the importance that this administration has placed on residents, employees, and volunteers who played important commUNITY roles in 2002.**

**The State of our City is good!  
The State of our City is strong!  
The financial State of our City is Sound!  
Our Neighborhoods are being improved.  
Progress is being made.**

**Tonight, I applaud all city employees and all who have volunteered because your hearts lie in our CommUNITY.**

**To each and every resident who has gone above and beyond in 2002 to make our city a safe, clean, and a decent place to live, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.**

**To our many volunteers whose talent and wisdom provide our CommUNITY's greatest natural resource, thank you.**

**Tonight, I reaffirm our commitment to tackle tough issues like crime, drugs, and housing.**

**We remain focused on our economy, education, and our environment.**

**We will continue to manage your funds as if they were our own.**

**We will continue to make ourselves available to you, not only in our offices, on our time, but on YOUR time, in YOUR work place, in YOUR meeting place, and in YOUR neighborhood.**

**The next few years will be filled with plans and projects that will further strengthen Columbus. We will continue to focus on CommUNITY issues openly, discussing our goals, finding ways to address needs, and finding ways to make the best use of our assets.**

**We welcome your input for a plan written by members of our own CommUNITY who contribute their thoughts, ideas, beliefs, and their dreams.**

**We will continue to operate within our means by setting priorities and finding the most effective, most efficient ways to get our jobs done.**

**We are a CommUNITY on solid ground!  
Ours is a record to build on, not to rest on.**

**While leaders and legislation may be important, the issue of building CommUNITY, commUNITY with a capital UNITY is about what is in your heart.**

**If we are to realize our hopes and our dreams, the hopes and dreams of our children and our grandchildren, we must ensure that Columbus remains strong and America remains the world's strongest force for peace and freedom.**

**We must remain One Nation, UNDER GOD, Indivisible.**

**God bless all who are serving our Country and all who are fighting terrorism. God bless you, God bless the CommUNITY that we have created, and God bless America.**

**Good night.**

\*(National and State statistics taken from the FBI's Uniform Crime Report & Columbus figures from CPD report).

